

Oct.  
& Nov.  
2004

# CROSSROADS

Vol. 11  
No. 9

A Newsletter of the United States Embassy, Nigeria



## AMERICAN CORNERS

How They Assist  
Nigeria's IT Growth

- President Bush Wins 2004 U.S. Election
- DV 2006 Lottery to Run Nov 5 to Jan 7, 2005
- Iraq: Building a New Society



## PAO's Note



U.S. Consulate General  
Public Affairs Officer,  
Atim Eneida George

# Education is Empowerment

**D**ear Crossroads Family:  
As I write this column we have crossed the threshold of another U.S. Election. President Bush enters his second term with a decisive victory as evidenced by record voter turnout. In the United States, this is a time for renewal of our compact. The Framers of our Constitution envisioned our

national mission statement in a 52-word Preamble that reads:

"We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

These words are both noble and compelling. The work of building democratic institutions and forging a sense of community is not easy yet makes all the difference in the world. Communities that share a common vision and commitment to equity and fairness are not afraid to test their worth in the crucible of electoral scrutiny. The aspirations that I allude to are not uniquely American. Nigerians and people the world over share our commitment

to social justice, peace and prosperity. Both Americans and Nigerians are learning to insist upon accountability and transparency in the conduct of our national affairs.

To enjoy the fruits of democratic governance fully, however, citizens must be empowered to exercise their democratic rights and responsibilities. Education is a key to empowerment. We lead this edition of Crossroads with a story on American Corners, a place where Nigerians can learn about the United States. This issue of *Crossroads* also features the College and Career Fairs organized by our Educational Advising Centers in Abuja and Lagos.

As today's advances in Information Technology (IT) provide tremendous opportunities to solve problems and improve service delivery, we also highlight the work and mission of Nigeria's Community Resource Centers (CRCs), a unique bilateral partnership to bring the best of the IT revolution to Nigerians. These institutions, located in each of the six geopolitical zones, are home to the latest technology from Internet access to Digital Video Conferencing.

Our recently-launched Non-Immigrant Visa Appointment System (NIVAS) serves as another excellent example of leveraging IT assets to enhance service delivery. NIVAS has dramatically reduced the backlog in requests for appointments. The Electronic Visa Application Payment Systems (e-VAPS) is another IT innovation designed to improve our services to the Nigerian traveling public. Peace, Atim. ♦

## Quotable Quote

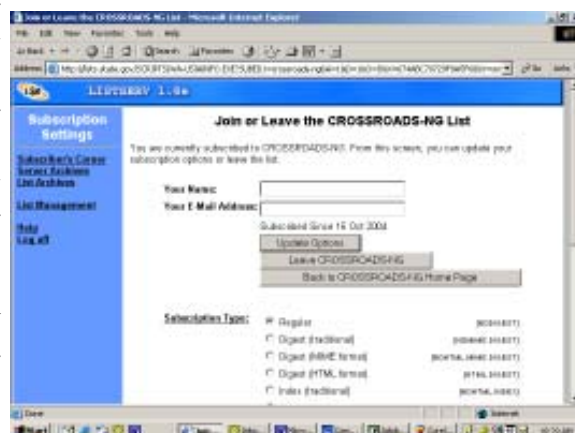
**"I love the United States' show of Interest in Africa. But why can't the American government discourage greedy African leaders from looting their country's treasury."**

- Samson Enohio  
Benin City.  
Writing on Nigeria's Challenged Environment.

## Editor's letter To Crossroads Readers

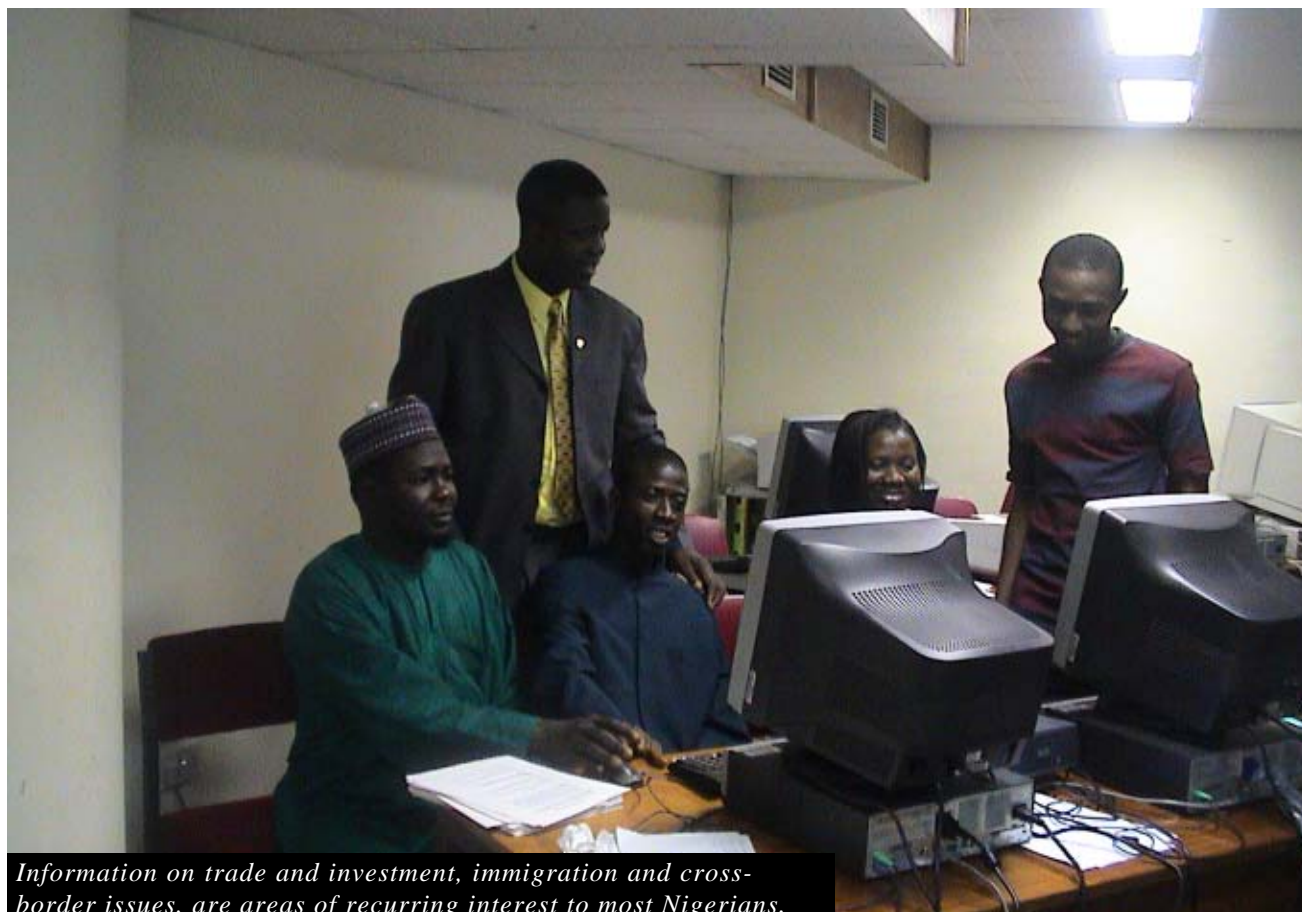
DEAR CROSSROADS READERS,  
We are still building our on-line access to an expanded version of *Crossroads*. Our virtual community distribution list continues to grow by the day. Some of you have already subscribed to the list through your e-mail to the Editor of Crossroads. We have gone a step further by creating an easily accessible way for readers to directly join or leave our mailing list using the **LISTSERV** system. Simply send an e-mail with your name and e-mail address to: **CROSSROADS-NG@LIST.STATE.GOV** and you are on. All further enquiries to The Editor at **crossroads@state.gov**

**SOMETHING NEW!**





# Building Effective Partnerships Through American Corners



*Information on trade and investment, immigration and cross-border issues, are areas of recurring interest to most Nigerians.*

**T**he application of educational technologies to everyday life has progressed beyond the use of basic drill and now includes the use of complex multimedia products and advanced networking technologies. Today, individuals can use multimedia to learn interactively and work on different projects. The American Corners build on this unique concept. Created as a public diplomacy tool by the U.S. State Department in 1992, the American Corners in Nigeria serve to increase mutual understanding between Nigerians and the United States by making available information about the U.S. in a variety of ways. Books, journals, magazines, video and CD-ROMs with a focus on various

aspects of the United States are available for public use.

The first American Corner was established in Ibadan on June 18, 2003. Today, nine other Nigerian cities Abuja, Bauchi, Kaduna, Calabar, Abeokuta, Kano, Jos, Port Harcourt and Enugu serve as home to American Corners. As these cities serve as hubs in agriculture, mining, shipping and international trade, they are natural venues for American Corners. Nigerians can research trade and investment opportunities, explore communication networks, cross-border issues, health, the environment and security, among other topics.

All of these signs are impressive signals of current progress that point Nigeria's way forward to what U.S.

Ambassador John Campbell described as "creating space for dialogue and mutual understanding." Students, educators and parents who want to learn more about study in the U.S. as well as travel and business, or contact their colleagues and counterparts in the U.S., can visit the nearest American Corner.

No doubt, the American Corners will lead to closer cooperation between Nigerians and Americans. While signing the Memoranda of Understanding to establish American Corners in the six geopolitical zones, Ambassador Campbell said "the Corners are also expected to be outreach centers that will lead the nation in technology, as it continues on the path of development." ♦



*Ambassador Campbell making his remarks at the September 28, signing ceremony of a Memoranda of Understanding establishing American Corners in Six Community Resource Centers in Nigeria.*

## Six States Sign Memoranda to Establish American Corners

**R**epresentatives of six states around the country came to Abuja on September 28 to sign Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) forming partnerships with the US government to establish American Corners. U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, John Campbell, said the new information centers are to provide a balanced representation of the United States. "People need to know what we Americans are all about and the need to communicate has also become greater since the

tragedy of September 11," Ambassador Campbell said. As assets to local communities and organizations, the Ambassador noted that these centers are expected to extend and consolidate US – Nigeria partnership in information technology transfer.

Four American Corners are currently operational in Nigeria in Ibadan, Jos, Kano, and Port Harcourt. The six new Corners will be strategically located to give the country's six geo-political zones equal

access to new information and intellectual development. They will be located within the Community Resource Centers in Abuja, Bauchi, Kaduna, Calabar, Abeokuta, and Enugu. The American Corners housed within the Community Resource Centers (CRC) consolidate a U.S. funded Education for Development and Democracy Initiative (EDDI) that began in 1998. The Community Resource Centers were initially managed by the U.S. Agency for International



Development, and Total Service Solutions - a private contracting company. However, on September 14, the local governments officially took control of each of the Centers, which now operate as self-sufficient institutions, while still providing important community services to local populations. The Public Affairs Sections in Abuja and Lagos will provide oversight of the American Corners established in these centers.

At the signing ceremony for the establishment of the Corners, Ogun State Governor Gbenga Daniels and the Deputy Governor of Enugu State Ikechukwu Itanyi led the group of six other states to sign on behalf of their states. Four governors who could not attend the signing, sent representatives. The signed MOU describes the responsibilities and details obligations on both sides of the partnership, from the U.S. government to the State governments where the Centers are located.

Since 2000, the U.S. has launched more than 100 American Corners in approximately 30 countries. The "American Corners" are a United States Department of State-sponsored initiative inaugurated worldwide more than 5 years ago. They serve as resource centers for information and programs highlighting American culture, history, current events and government. They are equipped to host discussion groups, seminars, digital video conferencing (DVCs), poster exhibits, and meetings with U.S. and local specialists on a wide range of American-focused topics. They also act as a regional repository for the use of American-themed books, videos, DVDs, and CD-ROMs and provide free Internet access and educational materials. Each center is operated as a partnership, while the U.S. provides equipment and materials, host institutions provide staffing and the free use of space.



*U.S. Country Public Affairs Officer Claudia Anyaso (left), and Deputy Chief of Mission Rick Roberts (right), watch as Ogun State Governor Gbenga Daniel signs the MOU for the American Corner situated in Abeokuta.*



*Enugu State Deputy Governor, Ikechukwu Itanyi, (left), signing on behalf of the Enugu State Governor.*

Traditionally, the United States Information Service (USIS) libraries provided a place for the public to find materials reflecting a broad view of American society, arts, culture, policy and government, but many factors over the past decade have

forced the closure of many of these libraries to the general public. The American corners will hopefully fill this information gap. Their programs will include digital video conferences, hi-speed Internet access, book and multimedia collections, satellite

programing and dialogue with individuals, groups, institutions and the media through local information and cultural activities and exchanges.

According to Ambassador Campbell, each of the American Corners will be free and open to everyone—students, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, government officials, and ordinary citizens. Anyone wishing to learn more about the United States, study at U.S. universities, do business with American companies, or contact their colleagues and counterparts in the United States can do so at the American Corner.

“The public will have access to a wide range of information, not only for purposes of research but also for what we call ‘purposes of action,’ as

**The American Corners will be free and open to everyone—students, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, government officials, and ordinary citizens.**

well. Business leaders can use the American Corner to locate prospective clients and suppliers. Students can learn about opportunities for study in the United States. NGO leaders can find colleagues in the United States with shared interests and shared challenges.

“Embassy officials and other U.S. representatives can serve as speakers, guests, and participants at the American Corner educational and

cultural events.

“Americans and alumni of US programs will be able to meet and conduct activities on American themes.” Campbell said.

Apart from just offering information and technology transfer, the Corners are also expected to provide space both physical and intellectual, for dialogue and mutual understanding. Resource materials that will be found in the Corners will include The Library of America collection - an impressive set of more than 100 of America’s best works, collections of videos, CD-ROMs and DVDs, reference books to provide basic information, and non-fiction books on a wide range of topics and reflecting a wide range of opinions.❖

## Locate a Community Resource Center and an American Corner Near You

**A**merican Corners are the first places to visit when you have questions about the United States. The goal of each Corner is to provide general, substantive and accurate information about the United States to interested parties. Materials in the American Corners cover a wide range of subjects pertaining to the United States, such as its policies, society, education and culture. Free, open access is provided to all materials.



Community Resource Center/  
American Corner  
**Abeokuta.**  
Kudirat Abiola Complex  
IBB Boulevard, Oke Mosan,  
Abeokuta  
0803-727-0666, 0803-373-4789



Community Resource Center/  
American Corner  
**Bauchi.**  
Professor Iya Abubakar  
Community Resource Center  
State Library Complex  
Abdulkadir Ahmed Road G.R.A.  
Bauchi  
077-544-801/2





Community Resource Center/  
American Corner  
**Enugu**  
Community Resource Center,  
Upper Presidential Layout  
Beside State Primary Education  
Board (SPEB)  
Independence Layout, Enugu  
042-457461, 042-457093



Chief Bola Ige Information  
Community Resource Center/  
American Corner  
**Abuja**  
Technology Center for Women  
Development  
Central Business District,  
Abuja  
09-6715939



Community Resource Center/  
American Corner  
**Kaduna**  
Women's Multipurpose Center  
9, Bank Road  
Off Ahmadu Bello Way  
Kaduna.  
0802-346-3263



Community Resource Center/  
American Corner  
**Calabar**  
Women Development Center  
Ekpo Archibong Street,  
Mariam Extension  
Calabar  
087-2389020/2



American Corner  
**Port Harcourt**  
Center for Advanced Social  
Science  
13, William Jumbo Street  
Old GRA  
Port Harcourt  
084-237-323

American Corner  
**Ibadan**  
Nigerian Society for Information,  
Arts and Culture (NSIAC)  
Leventis Building  
54, Magazine Road  
Jericho, Ibadan  
0803-324-6604, 02-2412422

American Corner  
**Jos**  
University of Jos  
11 Murtala Mohammed  
Way, By Jos University  
Teaching Hospital  
Jos  
0730-611928 or 0803-  
5894100  
e-mail:  
unijosamcorner@yahoo.com

American Corner  
**Kano**  
Kano Library Board  
Murtala Mohammed Library  
Complex  
Nasarawa Kano  
P.M.B 3094  
Kano  
064-648923 or 0803-589-5338  
e-mail:  
kanolibraryboard@yahoo.co.uk

# US Consular Section Reaches Out to Nigerians

**O**n August 11, the U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Nigeria launched its new on-line system for scheduling non-immigrant visa appointments during a press briefing at the Public Affairs Section in Lagos.

The new system allows applicants to choose the date and time of their appointment from all those available over the next 5 months, and it is available through our mission website <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov>.

Over the past month and a half, four officers traveled to 15 locations to demonstrate the new system and answer questions. Information Officer Storm Jackson and Vice-Consul Bill Murad began the series of demonstrations at the American Corner in Ibadan. The Corner is located at the Nigerian Society for Information, Arts, and Culture, and like all of the American Corners in Nigeria, it offers a variety of subjects pertaining to the United States. Over 100 people, including artists, journalists, community and business leaders, attended the event.

After the American Corner, the officers visited three universities, the University of Ibadan, the University of Lagos, and Babcock University in Ogun State. At Babcock, over 200 students attended and participated in a lively question-and-answer session. The Foreign Press Center in Ikeja was the next venue, where a select group of journalists and representatives of local non-government organizations covered the presentation. From the Lagos area, the officers traveled east to Enugu, where they demonstrated the new system at the Community Resource Center.

Around 60 people attended in Enugu, and several State government representatives came and discussed a



*Information Officer Storm Jackson (right), explains the new on-line visa appointment process to an audience in Enugu. At left, is Vice-Consul Bill Murad.*

variety of issues facing the local community.

The next step was the Community Resource Center in Calabar. But on the way there, the officers stopped at a cyber café in Umuahia to introduce the proprietor to the new system and to leave a stack of instruction sheets. Port Harcourt was the final destination of the East/South portion of the outreach program, and Jackson and Murad spoke at the University of Port Harcourt and at the Center for Advanced Social Sciences, now home to an American Corner.

The presentations then continued from the rainforested plains of the South to the mountains and valleys of the North, where officers spoke at the Community Resource Centers in Kaduna and in Abuja. Vice-Consul Murad also traveled to the American Corners in Jos and Kano and to the Community Resource Center in Bauchi. Abeokuta, where Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo grew up, provided the final venue for the outreach program, where another officer gave a demonstration of the new and innovative registration sys-

tem. "This program gave me a chance to see different parts of Nigeria and to engage with a large variety of Nigerian community and business leaders," Murad said.

According to Jackson, the initiative of traveling to discuss issues of importance to Nigerians will continue. "Plans are in the works to visit a number of other states like Ogun, Osun, Abia, Edo, Anambra, Ondo, Imo and Akwa-Ibom," he said. ♦

*From The Cowrie Creek Chronicle*

## DV 2006 Lottery Out

On September 28, the Department of State officially announced the commencement of the 2006 Diversity Visa Lottery. The Department of State will only accept completed Electronic Diversity Visa Forms submitted electronically at [www.dvlottery.state.gov](http://www.dvlottery.state.gov) during the registration period beginning 12 p.m. on November 5, and ending at 12 p.m. on January 7, 2005.

— <http://www.dvlottery.state.gov/> —



# President Bush Sends Ramadan Greetings to Muslims

*In a message to Muslims at the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, President Bush said Islam is a religion of peace. Below is a full text of the President's message delivered on October 14, 2004*

I send warm greetings to Muslims in the United States and around the world as they begin observance of Ramadan, the holiest season in their faith.

Ramadan commemorates the revelation of the Qur'an to Muhammed. By teaching the importance of compassion, justice, mercy, and peace, the Qur'an has guided many millions of believers across the centuries. Today, this holy time is still set aside for Muslims to remember their dependence on God through fasting and prayer, and to show charity to those in need.

American history has taught us to welcome the contributions of men

and women of all faiths, for we share the fundamental values of religious freedom, love of family, and gratitude to God. Americans who practice the

Islamic faith enrich our society and help our nation build a better future. Laura joins me in sending our best wishes.❖



*President George Bush making his remarks on the importance of Ramadan with Muslim leaders.*

## New On-Line Payment System Announced for Non-Immigrant Visa

In its continuing efforts to improve services to visa clients in Nigeria, the U.S. Mission is pleased to announce the Electronic Visa Application Payment System (e-VAPS). Beginning on December 1, 2004 all visitor visa applicants will be able to pay their Machine Readable Visa (MRV) fee using a scratch-card based system. Applicants may continue to use the current Valucard system until January 3, 2005.

This new service provides the following benefits to visa clients:

**1. The service is FREE:** applicants only pay the required MRV processing fee.

**2. The service is quick:**

applicants do not need to handle cash and will queue in fewer lines

before appearing before the consular officer for their interview.

**3. The service is secure:** each scratch card will be encoded with personal information and a hidden, random 16 character Private Identification Code (PIC) to verify that a visa applicant has paid for his/her application.



*U.S. Consul General Brian Browne signs e-VAP into effect as staff of the Fountain Trust Bank watch.*

**4. The service is convenient:** applicants or their proxy may go to any Fountain Trust Bank branch and request an e-VAPS card to pay for his/her visa appointment.

**How to obtain an e-VAPS card:**

The applicant or proxy should go to any Fountain Trust Bank and present his/her appointment letter, passport, and MRV fee of 14,000 naira (\$100 USD) in order to make a payment and receive their card.

The Consular section will be readily available to assist users with the transition to the new system. Inquiries can be made both by e-mail at [lagoscons2@state.gov](mailto:lagoscons2@state.gov) or [consularabuja@state.gov](mailto:consularabuja@state.gov) and by phone at 1-261-5697 / 5699 in Lagos or 9-523-0916 / 5857 / 2235 in Abuja.



# U.S. Elections 2004 Update

## Election Morning in Lagos



Rueben Abati at Election 2004.

**O**n November 3, 2004, at the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Consulate General, Rueben Abati, Editorial Chairman of the Guardian and Priscillia Kuye, former Nigeria Bar Association president provided broad perspectives on the implications of a Bush/Kerry presidency. It was an open session to discuss the 2004 U.S. Election, the morning after voting closed in the U.S.

The interactive session attracted a broad cross-section of leaders from the academia, professionals, the media, civil society and students. Participants had a feel of the U.S. elections as they were allowed to cast a vote during a mock election. Abati and Kuye advised Nigerians not to expect major policy shifts in U.S. foreign policy but a change of tactics. "Only tactics will change whether President Bush or Senator Kerry wins," Kuye said. Both speakers were however unanimous in expressing their fascination with the smooth and violence-free voting, which Abati said should be a challenge to Nigerian politicians and the electoral body that conducts elections in Nigeria. "The smooth election must be attributed to adequate preparations, voter mobilization, and to some extent, the issues at stake," Abati said. ♦

## Bush Wins 2004 Presidential Election

By Alexandra Abboud  
Washington File Staff Writer

**P**resident George W. Bush on November 2 was re-elected president of the United States.

"Voters turned out in historic numbers and delivered a historic victory," Bush said in a November 3 speech to supporters in Washington. "America has spoken, and I'm humbled by the trust and the confidence of my fellow citizens." As of November 3, Bush had won 29 states and 274 electoral votes with results in Iowa and New Mexico remaining too close to call. "President Bush's decisive margin of victory makes this the first presidential election since 1988 in which the winner received a majority of the popular vote," said Andrew Card, Bush's chief of staff, on November 3. "And in this election, President Bush received more votes than any presidential candidate in our country's history."

Bush also won the state of Florida — a state that was hotly contested in the 2000 election and a 2004 prize coveted by both candidates — with 52 percent of the popular vote to Democratic candidate Senator John Kerry's 47 percent. Experts agreed that if either candidate won both Florida and Ohio they would secure the victory, and Bush did just that. Bush led Kerry by about 140,000 votes in Ohio after the polls closed November 2, but uncounted provisional ballots resulted in delaying the official announcement of the winner. It was clear by November 3,



President Bush and First Lady Laura Bush acknowledge cheers at a victory party on November 3.

AP/WWP

however, that Kerry would not have enough votes to win the state even if the provisional ballots were included in the tally. As a result, the Kerry campaign conceded the election to Bush on November 3.

In his concession speech from Boston, Kerry said he spoke to the president and offered him and first lady Laura Bush his congratulations. "We talked about the danger of division in our country and the need ... for unity, for finding common ground and coming together," he said. "Today, I hope we can begin the healing."

In his speech to the nation, Bush echoed this theme of unity, reaching out to those who voted for Kerry, saying, "To make this nation stronger and better, I will need your support and I will work to earn it. I will do all I can do to deserve your trust. A new term is a new opportunity to reach out to the whole nation. We have one country, one Constitution, and one future that binds us."

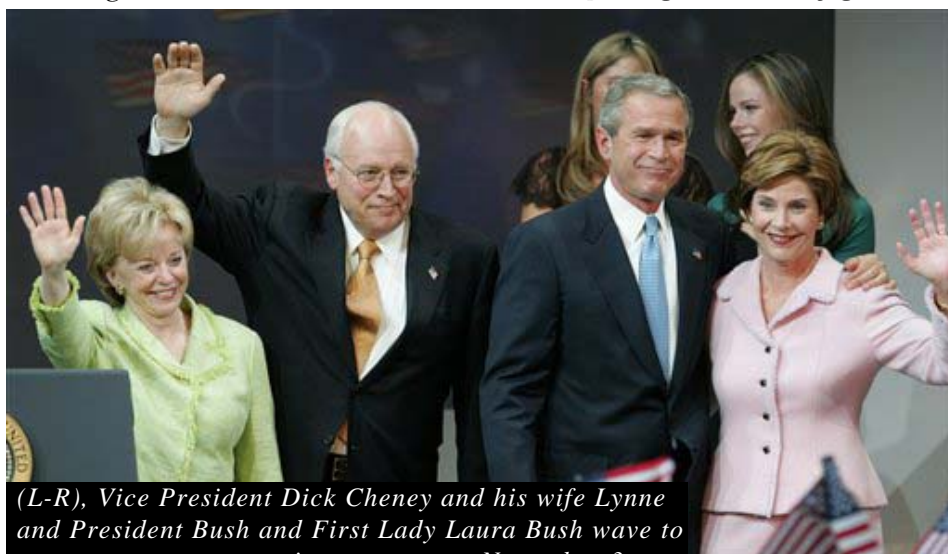


# U.S. Elections 2004 Update

The 2004 presidential election was marked by high voter turnout that resulted in long lines at many polling stations even after the official closing time. President Bush maintained a lead in the national popular vote throughout the evening, but the race appeared close as Senator Kerry secured many of the country's most populous states, including New York and California,

which together have 86 Electoral College votes. In the end, however, Bush trumped Kerry's 256 electoral votes with wins throughout the South and Midwest, especially in Florida and Ohio, which earned him 274 electoral votes, enough to win the election even without the results from Iowa and New Mexico. ❖

— <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/> —



(L-R), Vice President Dick Cheney and his wife Lynne and President Bush and First Lady Laura Bush wave to party supporters at a victory party on November 3.

## President Bush Reaches Out to International Community

**S**hortly after winning re-election, President Bush reached out to leaders around the world, calling for global cooperation in the war against terror.

Speaking to the press on November 4 at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the President said he would seek to work with U.S. friends and allies, including the European Union (EU) and NATO, “to promote development and progress, to defeat the terrorists, and to encourage freedom and democracy as alternatives to tyranny and terror.”

“I’ll reach out to everyone who shares our goals. And I’m eager to start the work ahead. I’m looking forward to

serving this country for four more years,” he said.

The president acknowledged that some of his policy decisions over the past four years had not been universally popular around the world. However, he cited several issues on which he hoped to work with U.S. allies, including a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the fight against HIV/AIDS, the Millennium Challenge Account and relief of global hunger.

Bush said he would continue to make foreign policy decisions with U.S. security interests foremost in mind, “but as I do so I will reach out to others and explain why I make the decisions I make.”

### Election Night in Abuja



Casting a ballot in a mock 2004 U.S. Election in Abuja.

**I**n Abuja, a panel of representatives from Nigerian political parties, university professors and legislators participated in a discussion on “Campaign Strategy” as part of the Embassy’s all-night election watch program in collaboration with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) on November 2, 2004.

The Panelists urged Nigerian politicians to learn from the U.S. experience highlighting the fact that despite the intense disagreements there was no violence in the U.S. elections. The Panel discussion was preceded by Ambassador John Campbell’s speech on U.S. engagements with Africa. Over three hundred Nigerians and the diplomatic community attended the election night program and participated in the discussion, and a “mock election.” About half of this number stayed the entire night monitoring the elections proceedings through live coverage from Radio and Television.

The Panelists’ called on Nigerian politicians to develop issues-based campaign strategy and violence free elections while Ambassador John Campbell said there would be “continuity of American engagement with Africa no matter who becomes the next U.S. President.” ❖

# 13 Rural Communities Benefit from U.S. Ambassador Self-Help Grants

**O**n Monday, September 27, the U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria, John Campbell, signed and distributed grants to 13 Nigerian rural-based self-help community organizations to execute different community development projects.

Eleven out of the 13 receiving organizations will carry out projects that have a direct impact on the life of their communities, including the construction of classroom blocks, provision of water to rural communities, provision of textbooks to secondary schools and women empowerment programs. Two other organizations will receive grants under the Democracy and Human Rights sector and will carry out programs to increase awareness and prevent human trafficking as well as enhance local government officials' knowledge of participatory development strategies.

Ambassador Campbell said the "Self-Help Program is about assisting individuals and community groups as they realize the projects that can bring about a positive impact in their lives, as well as the lives of people that come after them."

He said that by helping with the construction of a hospital, for example, the U.S. is investing in the long-term physical and economic stability of a community because "a healthy community means that people can lead productive and meaningful lives."

On the Democracy and Human Rights Fund, Ambassador Campbell said "we Americans firmly believe that a democracy, especially a young one, must be supported and our Democracy and Human Rights Fund is an example of tangible support."

He said that the ceremony is a public reminder of continued US Government support for, and



*Ambassador Campbell congratulates Yemi Adeleye-Olagbegi of the Women's Consortium of Nigeria, Bauchi Chapter after signing for a grant.*

commitment, to the development and prosperity of Nigeria.

The Ambassador's Self-Help concept is a United States government initiative intended to assist as well as teach local communities the benefit of helping themselves rather than relying on authorities. It is targeted at small-scale local community projects, which

are often overlooked within a larger, less flexible assistance program.

The overall objective of the Ambassador's project is to provide a mechanism to support and strengthen democratic institutions and civil society, as well as promote the adoption of, and adherence to, democratic values and practices in African nations. ❖

## How to Apply for the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Grant

**Application Process:** All requests for funding under the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Program (SSH), should be made on a "U.S. Embassy Abuja Self-Help Project Application" form. Application forms can be accessed on-line at <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov>

**Project Selection Criteria:** The SSH Program will assist viable projects that improve the economic and social conditions of a community and can be completed within six months.

**Enquiries:** Address all inquiries regarding the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Program to:

Self-Help Coordinator

United States Embassy

9, Mambilla Street, Abuja FCT, Nigeria

E-mail: [abujash@state.gov](mailto:abujash@state.gov) or visit <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov>





*Nigerian Stock Exchange Director-General Dr. Ndi Okereke-Onyiuke (second right), and Assistant Director-General Lance Musa Elakama (left), cheer Ambassador John Campbell as he rings the bell to close trading on the floor of the Nigerian Stock Exchange on October 22.*

## Ambassador Campbell Visits Stock Exchange, Reinforces U.S. Commitment to Nigeria's Development

*By Idika U. Onyukwu  
Editor Crossroads*

**U**.S. Ambassador to Nigeria John Campbell visited the Nigerian Stock Exchange on October 22. The visit provided the opportunity for the Ambassador to commend the Exchange for its role in spreading economic prosperity in Nigeria. Additionally, it served as a major morale booster for stock traders, Exchange staff and indeed the Director General of the Exchange Dr. Ndi Okereke-Onyiuke herself. This was reflected in the elaborate welcome speech of the director and the show of gratitude from the floor of the exchange. Discussions held in

meetings with chief executives of trading companies of the exchange also underscored the need for a greater U.S. investment in Nigeria. Ava Rogers, the Political and Economic Chief, Janet Duetsch, Economic Officer and Storm Jackson the Information Officer accompanied Ambassador Campbell to the Exchange.

In her welcoming remarks, Okereke-Onyiuke said the NSE has become one of the few institutions in Nigeria that is free from corruption. She noted that the Stock Exchange's 39-year history has been devoid of any fraud, scandals or insider dealings. "Integrity is the watchword and market operators subscribe to the

code 'Our word is our bond,' and by so doing, public trust in the Nigerian stock market has grown tremendously with about three million individual investors and hundreds of institutional investors." She said that foreign investors have noticed the openness in stock dealings and now own about 47% of the quoted companies using the facilities of the Exchange.

Since 1960, the Nigerian Stock Exchange has played an important role in Nigeria's development journey. The Exchange started operations in 1961 with 19 securities listed for trading. Today there are over 262 securities listed on the Exchange, made up of 11

Government Stocks, 49 Industrial Loan (Debenture/Preference) Stocks and 194 Equity / Ordinary Shares of Companies, all with a total market capitalization of over 1.7 trillion naira. In the last four years, the Exchange has returned over 40% in annualized returns. With good governance in place and economic prosperity in both the short and long term, there is money to be made at the Exchange.

In addressing a joint session of stock dealers, senior managers of the exchange and media representatives on the floor, Ambassador Campbell saluted Nigeria's efforts over the past 44 years and traced the link between good governance and economic prosperity. He said that two challenges are noticeable in nation building.

"Historically, newly-independent countries face challenges: one political, the other economic. Politically, the challenge is to establish an environment in which good governance is possible. Nigeria has

dealt with this and continues to do so. The second challenge facing newly independent countries is economic. Again, for newly independent countries, such as Nigeria was 44 years ago, the challenge is to establish an environment in which economic prosperity is possible. Whatever term is used, Nigeria has dealt with this and continues to do so.

"Economic prosperity, like good governance, is not something that happens overnight. It too, requires constant attention. A clear example of Nigeria's embrace of the need for economic prosperity is seen around us here, at the Nigerian Stock Exchange," Ambassador Campbell said.

To attract foreign investors, the Ambassador advised of the need to create a conducive economic environment that should increase opportunities for capital flow and in turn bring economic prosperity. He applauded the efforts of the Exchange to modernize its operations by incorporating automated trading and clear-

ing systems into their procedures.

Being a participant in the global economy, issues of money laundering continue to pose a major challenge to the NSE, the Nigerian economy and the rest of the international community. The U.S. envoy commended the efforts of the Exchange in tackling this problem. He said money laundering is a scourge that must be eliminated. "In the aftermath of September 11, I am especially pleased that the Nigerian Stock Exchange has moved forward on this issue. Everyone benefits and I applaud your efforts." He said.

One of Ambassador Campbell's last assignments at the floor of the house was ringing the traditional bell to officially close trading of stocks for the day. Campbell becomes the third U.S. Ambassador to pay an official visit to the Nigerian Stock Exchange. Ambassador Walter Carrington and Howard F. Jeter had visited the Exchange at different times. ♦



## THE Nigerian STOCK EXCHANGE



### Fast Facts:

- \* The Nigerian Stock Exchange mission statement is to promote increased capital formation in Nigeria by providing issuers and investors with a responsive, fair and efficient stock market.
- \* The Nigerian Stock Exchange was established in 1960 as the Lagos Stock Exchange.
- \* The Exchange started operations in 1961 with 19 securities listed for trading.
- \* Prices of new issues are determined by issuing houses/stockbrokers, while on the secondary market, prices are made by stockbrokers only.
- \* Clearing, Settlement and Delivery of transactions on The Exchange are done electronically by the Central Securities Clearing System Limited (CSCS), a subsidiary of The Stock Exchange.
- \* Transactions in the stock market are guided by the following legislations:  
Investments & Securities Decree No. 45, 1999.  
Companies and Allied Matters Decree 1990.  
Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission Decree, 1995.  
Foreign Exchange (Miscellaneous Provisions) Decree, 1995
- \* Following the deregulation of the capital market in 1993, the Federal Government in 1995 internationalised the capital market, with the abrogation of laws that constrained foreign participation in the Nigerian capital market.
- \* Visit the Nigerian Stock Exchange at: <http://www.Nigerianstockexchange.com>



# EAC College Fair Connects Students to Careers Back Home



*George Mason University recruiter Professor Ramond Akwule discussing admission process with prospective students at the Fair grounds in Lagos on October 8.*

**M**ore than 30 U.S. institutions participated in the 2004 U.S. Mission's Educational Advising Center (EAC) College and Career Fairs held at the Abuja Center for Arts and Culture in Abuja and the U.S. Consul General's residence in Lagos. In his remarks at the Fair in Lagos, U.S. Consul General Brian Browne, said that institutions selected for this year's fair were carefully chosen to cover different regions in the U.S. These institutions included Harvard, Pratt Institute, Berea College, George Washington, American Intercontinental University, Universities of Delaware, North Carolina, Cincinnati, Arizona, Houston, Central Oklahoma, Mississippi and Pittsburgh, as well as Howard, Rutgers, Columbia, Boston, Baruch, Strayer, Syracuse, West Virginia and Valparaiso Universities.

Recruiters from George Mason University, Prof. Raymond Akwule, and Huron University, (the American University in London) Mr. Folu Ojutalayo, were also

there to supply all the information that a prospective student might require about these institutions.

The Prometric Center for computer based testing and the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) had a stand each with staff to attend to visitors. The photographs of the best three candidates in the West African School Certificate Examination in the last few years were also on display. Corporate institutions represented at the Fair included Nestlé Foods who provided corporate gifts and Coca Cola with drinks.

An issue that kept on recurring throughout the Fair was the desire to see students return to Nigeria after their studies. Nestlé's Marketing Manager, Mrs. Iquo Ukoh delivered a career talk to "those who plan to come back to Nigeria." She said that there are great opportunities in Nigeria to come back to.



**Top to Bottom:** U.S. Consul General Brian Browne looks at materials on display at the WEAC stand; EAC stand; Baruch University stand; Consular Officer Howe counsels a parent; Students at the Fair

Mrs. Ukoh who studied Nutrition and Dietetics, but now works as a marketer, advised the students to open up their minds as they pursue their careers, and “look at other electives because that might be where you have an edge.” For example, she said, there was nothing wrong with someone studying Medicine or Pharmacy to take a course in Management, which might “come in handy down the line.”

To demystify the student visa process, the 2004 Fair had Consular Officers present to educate and counsel students and parents on issues of visas and some of the new security measures put in place for students. Jimmy Clarke, Non-Immigrant Visa Chief, said the students’ visa process at the Consulate has been designed “to allow student applicants maximum accessibility in a timely manner.” He said the most important thing a visa officer looks for when a student appears at the window is the student’s intention to return to Nigeria. Also important is the student’s financial resources, which he said, could create some problems if inadequate. “The applicant must convince the consular officer that he or she can go through school without having to resort to unauthorized employment and prolonged interruptions in the process of study.”



*Amechi Okobi, an Alumni of George Washington University and a staff of Nigerian Breweries PLC, explaining admission process to a parent at the 2004 EAC College Fair.*

Clarke said.

The venue of the 2004 Fair in Lagos contributed immensely to the success of the Fair. The serene residence of the Consul General provided ample space for free movement of students, and elaborate display of school materials under the booths of participating institutions. “I kind of like it here very much,” Ifeoma Nwajie, a senior secondary school III student of Caleb International School said. “The atmosphere is so soothing that I think I am already on the school premises of a school of my choice in the U.S.”

Nwajie said.

Over fifty secondary schools participated in this year’s College Fairs in Abuja and Lagos. The Educational Advising Centers of the Public Affairs Section routinely provide Nigerian students and third-country nationals with information and counsel regarding study in the U.S. The two centers in Abuja and Lagos provide services such as school selection, standardized testing, application processing and provide basic requirements for student visas. This was the sixth such College and Career Fair. ♦

## Fulbright Scholar to Head Human Kinetics Dept in UI



*Professor James Ajala*

**A**uthor and former Fulbright scholar Professor James Ajala has been appointed head of the department of Human Kinetics and Health Education at the university of Ibadan, Nigeria’s premier university. A letter signed by the Vice Chancellor of the institution said Professor Ajala was selected based on the strong recommendation made by the dean of the Faculty of Education, Professor Elaturoti. “This appointment is a mark of honor,” the Vice Chancellor said.

As head of department, Professor

Ajala will be responsible to the University Senate and will conduct teaching and research including general administration of the department. The appointment is for a period of three years.

Professor Ajala holds a Ph.D. in Public Health from Boston University, Massachusetts, USA. He was a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence affiliated to Springfield College, Massachusetts from 2001 to 2002.

*Heath Education for Primary schools and Nursery Physical Education* are some of the books written by Prof. Ajala. ♦



# IRAQ: BUILDING A NEW SOCIETY

*"Like every nation that has made the journey to democracy, Iraqis will raise up a government that reflects their own culture and values...Iraqis will write their own history, and find their own way."*

—President George W. Bush

Iraqis, with help from the Coalition and many partners, are rebuilding their country and offering freedom, new opportunities and much needed services to their people.

Security problems remain a major challenge for the Iraqi people and for development in various parts of the country. Nevertheless, real progress has been made in many key areas.

## Infrastructure

- Oil revenues for the Iraqi people since June 2003 have been estimated at nearly \$18 billion.
- Access to essential services are being provided without discrimination.
- The port of Umm Qasr has been rehabilitated and reopened to commercial traffic, producing more than \$18 million in tariff revenues, with projections of more than \$24 million this year.
- The Al Mar Bridge in northern Iraq, the Tikrit Bridge in central Iraq, and the Khazir Bridge on the highway between Baghdad and Jordan in western Iraq have been renovated, allowing the delivery of commercial and humanitarian cargo throughout Iraq.
- Water and sanitation projects are underway across Iraq, benefiting 11.8 million residents.
- A new program will clear 20,000 kilometers of Iraq's waterways and employ about 100,000 Iraqis.

## Security and Stability

- More than 100,000 law enforcement officers are on duty.
- More than 62,000 Iraqi armed forces, including army, air force, national guard, and coastal defense units, are serving or training.

## Education

- Over 2,405 schools have been rehabilitated, 33,000 secondary school teachers trained and 8.7 million textbooks printed and distributed.
- Twenty-five Fulbright grantees and over 20 Iraqi high school students are studying in U.S. educational institutions.
- The first "American Corner" opened in Iraq, including hundreds of books about the U.S., a video and DVD library, Internet connected computers and videoconferencing capabilities.

## Health

- Ground was broken on the first two of 150 new primary health care centers to be built across Iraq.

## THE ROAD TO DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

- Interim Government announced, Governing Council dissolved – June 1
- Election Commission established – June 4
- Transfer of sovereignty to Iraqi Interim Government – June 28
- National Conference convenes and selects Interim National Council – August 15
- National elections for permanent government – scheduled for January 2005

- Some 110 health clinics have been opened, 2,500 medical staff are being trained, and over 600 medical centers are being equipped.
- Five million children under the age of 5 have been vaccinated against childhood diseases.

## Economic Growth

- The new Iraqi currency is stable and has appreciated against many currencies.
- Small loans for entrepreneurs totaling over \$33 million are available around the country.
- The Iraq Stock Exchange opened in June 2004 including 44 companies with a market capitalization of over \$1.9 billion.
- An Economic Trade zone in the north is being developed, connecting it to the central and southern regions.
- Business training courses are being offered to Iraqi businesspeople.

## Advancing Women

- The Iraqi cabinet includes six women ministers and seven women deputy ministers.
- Twenty-eight women's centers throughout Iraq (22 now open) offer computer and literacy classes, job skills, and access to information about health care and legal services.

## Press

- Iraq has a vibrant and free press—with over 300 newspapers and numerous television and radio outlets.
- Iraq has welcomed the world's press; many media have opened permanent offices.
- Iraqis have access to a variety of information sources allowing the independent formation of opinions and the ability to make crucial decisions about the future.

## Culture

- Cultural preservation activities are underway at the Iraq National Museum and the Iraq National Library.
- An Archaeological Site Protection Plan and stolen artifact list are being developed.
- The Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra performed in the U.S. and had workshops with cellist Yo-Yo Ma.
- Iraqi wrestlers, boxers, and archers received training in the U.S. and participated in the 2004 summer Olympics.
- The Iraqi soccer team, competing in the Olympics for the first time since 1988, qualified for the semi-finals.





Consulate General of the United States of America  
Public Affairs Section  
2, Broad Street  
P.O. Box 554 Lagos - Nigeria  
Tel.: 01-2632577, 2633560, 2633395  
Visit our Website at <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/>

or

Embassy of the United States of America  
Public Affairs Section  
7, Mambilla Street  
Maitama District,  
P.O. Box 5760  
Garki, Abuja  
Tel.: 09-523-5226/7

**CROSSROADS** is published bi-monthly by the Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy, Nigeria. Address all correspondence to the Information Office, 2 Broad Street, Lagos. Telephone: (01)263-2504, 263-3713, 263-5397; Fax: 01-263-5397

**Editorial Team:** CLAUDIA ANYASO (Country Public Affairs Officer), ATIMENEIDA GEORGE (Public Affairs Officer), STORM P. JACKSON (Information Officer), IDIKA U. ONYUKWU (Editor).

E-mail us at: [crossroads@state.gov](mailto:crossroads@state.gov) or visit our Website at: <http://nigeria.usembassy.gov/>

Nov Events	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 <i>U.S. Presidential Elections</i>	3 <i>U.S. Elections: The Morning After (Lagos)</i>	4	5	6
	7	8	9 <i>Media Briefing (Lagos)</i>	10 <i>U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)</i>	11 <i>Veterans Day</i>	12 <i>End of Ramadan</i>	13
	14	15	16 <i>Media Briefing (Lagos)</i>	17 <i>International Education Week (Lagos and Abuja)</i>	18	19	20
	21 <i>International Education Week ends</i>	22 <i>World Television Day</i>	23 <i>Media Briefing (Lagos)</i>	24 <i>U.S. study classes (Lagos and Abuja)</i>	25 <i>Thanks Giving Day</i>	26	27
	28	29 <i>5th Fulbright Alumni Conference</i>	30 <i>Media Briefing (Lagos)</i>				
2004							

Please note that ALL events on this calendar are STRICTLY by invitation. For enquiries please call the telephone numbers listed above.